

AAFES/Commissary Installation Council Meeting Minutes – 18 January 2006

1. MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman
DMWR
NCMO
CANMR
ACS
BENELUX Finance
650 MI

2. UNITS NOT REPRESENTED:

USA NATO
AFN
USAFE
Navy Element
79th Med Det.
128th Signal Co.
39th Signal Bn
Community Affairs Branch (HSG)
Preventive Medicine
USNMR
US DEL to NATO
US Mission to NATO
USAG Brussels
Survey Section SHAPE

3. ADVISORS:

AAFES Representatives
DeCA Representative

Recorder

4. The Chairman opens the meeting at 14.05 and welcomes the attendees. The minutes of the last meeting are read and approved as written.

5. COMMISSARY

March is the national nutrition month; Commissary coupled with SHAPE Health Clinic and Army Community Service WIC Office will conduct tours in order to advise customers on how to get the most nutrition out of their shopping at Commissary. They will also offer tips for a balanced diet on a balanced budget. Throughout the store shelf talkers will assist customers in reading labels located on food products.

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The second charrette meeting for the construction of the new Commissary will take place on 23 January.

No major complaint was received during the holidays; customers found what they wanted.

Commissary personnel on the floor now wear burgundy smocks and jackets instead of blue; they are ready to help customers in their shopping and may be asked for help if needed.

a. Old Business

(1) Seattle Best coffee was deleted from the DeCA lists and replaced by other brands. However, because so many requests were received from the customers, Commissary got back the 2 best sellers from Seattle Best, which are now to be found on the shelves.

(2) The special orders matter has been emphasized with the staff; Commissary now tries to get the items within 7 days or sooner except for large quantities where a little longer is needed. Customers can always go and see the Commissary Manager or his Deputy who will do their best to procure the item.

(3) 10 different Splenda items are to be found in one section of the store; special cake mix is carried. Unfortunately it is not possible to get ready-prepared cakes, but all necessary ingredients are available. Commissary is still researching the Splenda fruit juices and drinks; more information would be appreciated.

(4) Lines might happen at the store but they are usually a sign that something special has happened, for example, sick personnel; the managers usually try to rectify the problem as quickly as possible.

b. New Business

(1) The Commander would like the Commissary management to look at the possibility of opening the store 7 days a week like AAFES. The Commissary being closed, AAFES is not getting all the customers they should on Mondays. The opening of the store would give an extra service to the customers but also an extra push to AAFES sales. The Commissary manager will try to support and satisfy the customers; he will contact his headquarter; however, all depends on the sales as money is involved. The research made during the last 3 months shows higher shopping percentage but lower accounts; a lot of US personnel slots went away and are not replaced, which results in less customers; also, people who are waiting for a house are usually not shopping at the Commissary.

(2) It would be interesting to know why some big seller items in Germany are not carried in Belgium. Usually items that sell well are also leading items across the bordure. The sales are on constant watch, and a general market review decides what items are carried.

6. AAFES

a. Old business

(1) There is a lot of improvement at the Food Court. Although recruitment is hard in this area because of the distance from the schools and the housing areas, AAFES management will try and keep things changing and hopefully also keep the good status.

(2) The hallway should now be more peaceful as the kids are back to school; however, this area needs to be kept for the birthday parties.

(3) Large size clothing will be coming in for Spring and Summer.

(4) A larger selection of 220V appliances is coming, especially new vacuum cleaners; outdoor power tools are also worked on.

(5) For special orders, please let the management know.

(6) Subway is closed for the moment; it will reopen soon, probably around mid-February. A negotiation process has been going on for a franchised shop; in this case employees will not depend on the Government anymore.

(7) The new Turkish Kebab goes very well; it is open at noon and in the evening, and will go on 7 days a week until the new Subway opens; the opening times will then be re-looked at.

(8) As far as clothing is concerned, more brand names, including Liz Clayborne, will soon be available, also, more fashionable and business like lines.

(9) It is very difficult for the Beauty Shop concessionaire to show detailed prices for everything; they depend on the type of hair: long or short, the type of shampoo, the type of conditioner, the type of service, and so on, but the customers may always ask.

(10) The control of hot dogs is done by the AAFES employees who have standards to follow.

(11) The construction of the car wash which was planned at first for November is delayed. The location had to be changed and with the new location the costs have increased: a new design is needed, the infrastructure needs to be looked at: water, power, ... The Commander needs to take a decision.

b. New Business

(1) Ipod and Apple items are not always available; the replenishment depends on a pre-set allocation to AAFES and the distribution is difficult which prevents meeting the demands of all the customers.

(2) Customers would like to have a larger choice of business type shoes if possible.

(3) The self-scanners are not all working anymore; they have been neglected; AAFES management is aware of the problem and is trying to have them repaired. However, the prices marked may not always be correct when some items are on discount, for example.

(4) People who have to come from SHAPE and who finish work at 17.30 would like the hours of the Laundry/Dry Cleaning Pick-up Point shifted 30 min. These extra 30 minutes would allow them to get to the shop in time even if the traffic is heavy.

(5) There is no place even at the food court to just have a coffee and sit down. No real fancy place would be needed but a small place where people can just chat in front of a cup of coffee. The Commissary Manager will talk about that subject during the charrette meeting; such a place could be included in the plan between AAFES and the new Commissary.

(6) AAFES is trying to avoid lines during lunchtime; it might still happen and is usually a matter of minutes before the problem is solved. There are now more people able to handle cash registers and the cashiers have been told to call for a new register when there were 3 or more customers waiting. They have been told also that anyone in uniform had priority to service during lunchtime.

(7) Lay-away payment, Star Card payment and check cashing is possible at any register.

(8) Every store in Europe had problems getting turkey fryers on time this year.

(9) It takes months to get repaired electronic items back. Televisions need to go to Germany for repair, which explains part of the delay. AAFES can do follow-ups every week instead of every month, and try and monitor repairs closer this year. AAFES management can also decide to give a refund when the item is not back after 30 days.

(10) Canadians can buy satellite dishes easily but decoders are also needed and those are hard to purchase. This issue will be looked into.

(11) Echoes from the Canadian community show that people are happy with the food court and emphasize that employees are now always smiling to their customers.

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(12) All accessories compatible with previously bought computer items cannot always be found. AAFES receives those types of items in lots which are not always complete: they might receive CPUs but not the screens for example. When the problem is caught, the management submits the issue to the buyers, but it is not always the case.

(13) New DVDs coming in never last very long; the copies are gone very quickly. It may be a profile problem if the quantities are wrong; this issue needs to be checked.

(14) At the Military Clothing Sales Store ACU odd sizes are left only and patches and flags are hard to get. ACUs were received only in Schinnen and Chievres from the Army warehouse located in Germany. This warehouse receives the items very slowly from the States. Not everything will be received, they might get tops without bottom and all the sizes will not be supplied. AAFES manager will check on the insignias (Division patches) for ACUs

7. There being no more discussion Mr. Romero thanks everyone for attending the meeting and concludes the session at 15.15. The next AAFES/Commissary Installation Council meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, 27 April 2006 at 14.30.

Signed by

AAFES Manager

Commissary Manager

Director of Logistics